

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8713

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS LONDON 16080

E. O. 11652:NA

TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SMITH INTERVIEWS

1. IAN SMITH HAS APPEARED IN TWO LENGTHY TELEVISION PROGRAMS TAPED IN SALISBURY SEPTEMBER 23 AND PRESENTED HERE ON SEPTEMBER 25 AND 26. IN BOTH INTERVIEWS SMITH HAS COME ACROSS AS LOGICAL, REASONABLE, MODERATE AND FLEXIBLE. THE FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED:

-- THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON THE BASIS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, BUT THE PROPOSALS THEMSELVES REQUIRE SIGNIFICANT CLARIFICATION;

-- ONE-MAN/ONE-VOTE CAN BE ACCEPTED, IF THERE ARE ALTERNATIVE SAFEGUARDS (E.G. SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS, INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY) WHICH PROVIDE SUFFICIENT REASSURANCES FOR MINORITIES. CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS MAY BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN A
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QUALIFIED FRANCHISE;

-- SMITH IS "PREPARED TO GIVE CONSIDERATION" TO DISBANDING SOME ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES. NEW RECRUITS CAN BE ACCEPTED INTO THE SECURITY FORCES IF THEY MEET THE NECESSARY HIGH STANDARDS;

-- IN A POST-INDEPENDENCE RHODESIA THERE NEED BE NO RECRIMINATION AGAINST FORMER GUERRILLAS;

-- SMITH DOES NOT REGARD THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND AS A SIGNIFICANT SAFEGUARD FOR THE WHITE COMMUNITY BECAUSE A BLACK GOVERNMENT MAY SIMPLY IGNORE ITS PROVISIONS AND BECAUSE COMMUNIST NATIONS COULD PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FINANCE;

-- IF THE SEARCH FOR AN EXTERNAL SETTLEMENT FAILS, SMITH WILL AIM FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. IN EITHER EVENT, HE EXPECTS A SETTLEMENT BY THE END OF NEXT YEAR.

2. COMMENT: SMITH GAVE TWO IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCES BEFORE AN ALREADY SYMPATHETIC BRITISH AUDIENCE. WHILE HE MADE EVIDENT HIS DISTASTE FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, HE ALSO PRESENTED HIMSELF AS OPEN MINDED AND WILLING TO NEGOTIATE. HE HEDGED HIS ANSWERS ON SIGNIFICANT POINTS SUCH AS ONE-MAN/ONE VOTE BUT REJECTED NOTHING. SMITH SOUGHT TO CONVEY THE IMAGE OF A FORTHRIGHT, DEDICATED LEADER, WEARY OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF POWER AND WISHING ONLY TO RETURN TO THE TRANQUILITY OF HIS FARM.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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